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General Taylor's Naming by Kennedy Could Be Significant Move for U. S.

The naming of General Maxwell D. Taylor as his military representative by President Kennedy could be a very significant appointment indeed.

General Taylor, the reader may recall, is author of the book, "The Uncertain Trumpet," and through it and in other ways he has been critical of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in our Defense Department. He has also been an outspoken advocate of the belief that we can maintain our nuclear strength and at the same time make ourselves more capable of handling "brush fire" wars — limited battles like Korea.

General Taylor is an able, intelligent and imaginative officer. He can be of great value to the country and to the President if his job should turn out to be that of adviser. The "military representative" tag for the job may be a bit misleading, though the President said that Gen. Taylor would represent him in military matters of some sorts at home and abroad.

General Taylor is not, President Kennedy said, to stand between the Joint Chiefs and the President. Rather, he is to act as "an adviser and staff officer primarily within the military and intelligence fields."

Stewart Alsop, writing in a recent issue of the Saturday Evening Post on the Cuban invasion debacle, reported a widespread belief that having a disinterested man who could judge military and intelligence plans made by others would be highly valuable in avoiding such difficulties in the future. As he pointed out the Central Intelligence Agency mapped out the Cuban plan, enthusiastically presented it, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved it on certain conditions — one of which was give cover. All of them, then, were wrapped up in the formulation of the plan and found it difficult to judge the plan objectively. Even when, upon advice of Adlai Stevenson and others, President Kennedy vetoed air support from the American Navy, the plan went through because the CIA got overly enthusiastic about it.

An independent thinker, divorced from the formulation of such a plan but with thorough knowledge of both military

and intelligence procedures might have been able to show up its weaknesses much better, the feeling goes.

It makes sense. And General Taylor has the qualifications to do the job.

Whether this is exactly the job he will do was not made clear. But the general can be expected to speak out for what he sees as being right, without regard to hurt feelings or party politics. He is a good American and a fine officer, and should be highly valuable to the American defense and intelligence efforts.